

Camp Wing

Property Plan Unveiled

Conservation Administrator Joe Grady and the town's conservation commission last week reviewed and adopted a property management plan for the Camp Wing area which will open part of the town's 354 acres to the public through a series of walking trails.

A public hearing will be held by the commission on September 26 to discuss trail layout.

The draft plan was prepared by consultant Jessica Schultz, stewardship coordinator of the Wildlands Trust of Southeastern Massachusetts assisted by conservation officials and citizens.

In 1998, by a unanimous vote of town meeting, the town approved borrowing \$1.5 mil-

lion for conservation land purchase at the site and later received \$500,000 toward the purchase through a state self help grant.

The Camp Wing purchase was a win-win situation for the town and the Camp, owned by Crossroads for Kids, Inc., who retained over 300 acres of its own camp property and sold the 354 adjacent acres to the town, preventing it from future development.

Located near the South River, the property is under the permanent protection of the town's conservation commission.

Grady said the objective of
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the management plan is to balance the natural values of the property with public access and provide short and long term recommendations for management of the property.

The plan sets three main objectives for management of the property: 1) Protect Camp Wing conservation area's natural values; 2) Promote public use of the property including activities such as passive recreation, education and research; 3) pursue land protection in surrounding areas.

The executive summary of the plan notes that educational benefits to the community are high. The short loop trails proposed will provide visitor access to high quality habitat areas, while minimizing disturbance, for scientific study. In addition, other areas highlight the agricultural heritage of the area showcasing abandoned

cranberry bogs.

The best area for access and trail development is off Franklin Street, according to the report. Two areas off Keene Street could support short loop trails to specific destinations. The report advises that the trail to the peninsula should be maintained and a bird blind established to minimize disturbance to waterfowl. A potential loop trail could be established into the red maple swamp to an old cranberry bog, now reforested. Some handicapped accessible trail options are possible off Franklin Street.

The report said that threats to the integrity of the conservation area and to visitor enjoyment include non-point source pollution from Route 3 and anticipated roadway expansion. Residential development both new and existing homes threaten to encroach upon surrounding undeveloped land and the property.

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Recommendations include protection of adjacent parcels to protect the integrity of the property including surrounding undeveloped lands off Keene and Temple Street, land on the Duxbury/Pembroke border that would protect a corridor of land between the Herring Brook and Camp Wing, joining over 1,000 acres, and 3) remaining land owned by Crossroads for Kids, Inc., north of Temple Street.

Besides preserving the rural character of Duxbury the land purchased protects groundwater supply by preserving a significant corridor along the South River, preserving habitat for numerous plants and animals and providing links with existing conservation lands. The property also protects stream habitat.

Some Franklin Street neighbors raised concerns about proximity of trails to their properties but were assured the trails would be a good distance away from private property.

ConCom Chairman Al Vautrain noted that the Camp Wing management plan is the first formal land management plan in the town and was two years in the making.